

# Nuclear Policy

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### NOTICE:

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, the NPP FLASH has been temporarily suspended to focus our staff resources on the [Special Forum](#)

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## **Nuclear Weapons**

### **1. US Nuclear Program**

Jane's reports that the US Navy's proposed program to convert up to four Ohio-class ballistic missile nuclear submarines, which have to be withdrawn from nuclear service under arms control agreements, to cruise missile and special forces platforms now appears more likely to be funded with additional support from President George Bush. The program has support by the US Navy submarine branch, the US Special Operations Command and in Congress.

["USN SSGN conversion gains support, funding"](#)

A US official said that according to new test assessments by the US Defense Department's Office for Test and Evaluation, which are classified, the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles being upgraded under a \$4.5-billion US Air Force program are less accurate and have a shorter range than the ones they are replacing. The analysis states that the problems may be a result of the US Air Force's decision to bypass a full over-haul of the missiles in favor of a cheaper upgrade process. The 1960s-vintage Minuteman III is to become the mainstay of the US land-based nuclear arsenal once the Peacekeeper MX ICBMs are removed from service, as planned by the Bush administration as part of the START agreements, though these problems may interfere with those plans. Defense analysts are reportedly confused because the upgrades were intended only to maintain capabilities, not improve them, and the contractors have designed much more advanced guidance systems.

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## **2. UK Test of US Missile**

The US-built Tomahawk missile successfully completed its final test launch from the British attack submarine HMS Trafalgar in the Gulf of Mexico before it goes into full operational capability with the Royal Navy.

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## **3. Hiroshima & Nagasaki Commemoration**

Thirty to fifty thousand people at an annual ceremony in Japan's Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park observed 60 seconds of silent prayer on August 6 at 8:15 a.m. to remember the 140,000 people who died when the US dropped the atomic bomb in 1945. On Thursday, August 9, 4,500 participants observed in Nagasaki 60 seconds of silent prayer at 11:02 a.m. to commemorate the second time a US plane dropped an atomic bomb. 70,000 people perished in the Nagasaki bombing. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said he would redouble efforts to achieve a worldwide ban on testing of atomic weapons. He said, "As the only country that has experienced a nuclear attack... we have appealed to the global community to eradicate nuclear weapons and build a lasting peace, so that the devastation of nuclear warfare will never again be repeated." Japan surrendered in World War II on August 15, though many Japanese are still divided over the role of individual Japanese in the country's aggression towards its neighbors.

["Hiroshima Marks Bombing Anniversary"](#)

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## **Arms Control**

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### **1. US Arms Control Policy**

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Lee Feinstein, a Visiting Scholar with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, argues in an editorial that while the Bush administration has formally termed its talks with Russia over nuclear arms cuts to be "consultations" and unnecessary because Russia was cutting its nuclear forces regardless, the Bush administration is clearly engaged in a high-profile exchange in which the US is able to move forward on missile defense as the trade-off for the mutually agreed nuclear cuts that Russia needs. Feinstein states that US State Department arms control adviser John Bolton asserts that the administration's first choice is mutual withdrawal from the ABM treaty rather than a replacement agreement, but officials have also made it clear that they would be prepared to accept a "political declaration" with Russia. Feinstein argues that agreements such as these can still be effective, citing the 1975 Helsinki accords, which created what is now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and which were not treaties but politically binding agreements not subject to ratification in the US Senate. Feinstein also argues that it may be in Russia's interest to disagree with the US now, gain domestic approval by criticizing the US when it does withdraw from the ABM, and then gain further domestic strength by then negotiating limits on the US missile defense system.

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## **Ballistic Missile Defense**

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### **1. US BMD Program**

TRW Inc. has been awarded a seven-year, \$564 million follow-on contract to develop and deliver Battle Management Command, Control, and Communications (BMC3) products for the Ground-based Midcourse Defense Segment (GMDS) program, formerly known as "National Missile Defense," by Boeing Company. The BMC3 element is considered the brains of the entire GMDS system. TRW's participation in missile defense also includes building the Defense Support Program (DSP) satellite, leading a team competing for the Space Based Infra Red System (SBIRS) Low ballistic missile tracking and discrimination system, and developing the Tactical High Energy Laser, the Airborne Laser, and the Space Based Laser."

The US Air Force launched a \$256-million military satellite designed to detect the launch of missiles within its view as small as a Scud. First used during the Cold War to warn of a nuclear strike by the Soviet Union, the Bush administration is seeking the deployment of satellites like this one as a component of future missile defense systems.

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## 2. US BMD Politics

US Senate majority leader Tom Daschle criticized US President George Bush for his administration's "single-minded approach" to national security. In an advance copy of his text, Daschle says, "We support an increase in both the Pentagon budget and in missile defense, but a 57 percent increase this year - along with the prospect of hundreds of billions of dollars in future years - would cannibalize the personnel and force structure that deal with the threats we are likely to face." Noting that the administration has recently found fault with six international agreements, he said, "Our allies will follow us only if we use our unparalleled strength and prosperity to advance common interests. Only then will our power inspire respect instead of resentment." "National missile defense," Daschle adds, "is the most expensive possible response to the least likely threat we face." ["Senate Leader to Challenge Bush on Missile Defense"](#)

US Senator Carl Levin clarified remarks quoted in the Washington Post, stating that he did not say, "the whole idea of missile defense is a joke." However, he said that it would make sense to deploy missile defenses if they made the US more secure, but, if deployment caused unintended consequences that would leave our nation less secure then we should not deploy. He believes that these consequences could include setting back arms reductions with Russia or increasing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

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## 3. US-Russia Talks on BMD

A senior US Defense Department official reported that two days of Pentagon meetings have been "very positive" between senior US and Russian defense teams head of a visit to Moscow by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for talks next week with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Ivanov. Their discussions include US missile defense plans and the prospects for closer security ties between the two countries. One senior defense official described as "an exchange of information, more than an exchange of views." The 10-member Russian delegation is headed by General Yuri Baluyevsky, first deputy chief of the Russian military staff, and the US team is headed by Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith. The US Defense Department issued a brief statement saying the delegations had a "substantive discussion on a broad range of issues related to strategic stability and international security."

["U.S., Russia Talks Conclude in D.C."](#)

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#### **4. Commentary on US-Russia Talks**

Jon Wolfsthal, an associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, argues in the *Moscow Times* that US President George Bush, by pursuing his missile defense agenda so aggressively, may interfere with his negotiating the "new strategic framework" he seeks and may only reinforce the importance of large and technologically advanced nuclear arsenals. Wolfsthal states that both the US and Russia apparently wish to cut their arsenals, but within the US there is disagreement over how many to cut, from where, and whether this will begin with previously negotiated (but unachieved) reductions or ignore these agreements. However, if the US proceeds on missile defense and abrogates the 1972 ABM Treaty, Russia threatens it will redeploy as many as 3,600 nuclear weapons within ten years in what seems as the worst-case scenario for a US worried about Russian accidental launches. Wolfsthal argues that if the Bush administration is most concerned with creating a new strategic framework, it should emphasize political and economic agreements with Russia rather than forcing it and others to cope with a unilateral decision to deploy missile defenses.

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#### **5. European Views on BMD**

The journal *Survival* has published the comments of several strategic experts who participated in two meetings conducted by the Brookings Institution, the Atlantic Council and the IISS. Ivo Dalder, of the Brookings Institution, and Christopher Makins, of the Atlantic Council, state that vocal European opposition to US plans for missile defense have quieted, though a consensus has yet to emerge on how to proceed on defenses on the one hand and arms control and nuclear weapons on the other. Their essay discusses how European views have changed over the past eighteen months and argue that a consensus on ballistic missile defense which includes the following four principles stands to be acceptable to both the US and Europe: defenses must be embedded in a broad nonproliferation strategy; they must target small missile threats from small states; they should be deployed only after their efficacy is proven; they should be part of a cooperative strategy with Russia that includes formal limits on offensive and defensive weapons systems.

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#### **6. Commentary on BMD**

In an editorial in the *New York Times*, Caleb Carr, and a novelist a contributing editor of *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History*, argues that the planned missile shield cannot provide

Americans with the overall security from attack that President Bush is hoping to give them as there has never been any way to defend any country from an enemy determined to launch a sneak attack. For example, in the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, which Carr states is often cited as an example of a sneak attack the US would have liked to prevent, if it had "been ruled impossible by Japan's senior commanders because of some American defensive innovation, those very resourceful men in Tokyo would doubtless have come up with another way to achieve their purpose, for the Japanese government had decided that it was vital to cripple our power in the Pacific." Carr states that missile defenses will eventually work, with enough investment, but they will still only protect against a certain type of attack. For that reason, Carr argues, while the US invests heavily, the rest of the world will move ahead perfecting other weapons against which missile defense is no defense. ["The Myth of a Perfect Defense"](#)

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## **Proliferation**

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### **1. Alleged PRC Missile Proliferation**

US Senator Joseph Biden met with PRC President Jiang Zemin near Beijing, where they discussed the PRC's human rights record, missile defence and other trade issues. Biden is joined on this trip by Senate Democrat Paul Sarbanes and Republicans Fred Thompson and Arlen Specter. In the meeting, Jiang took a softer tone on his country's opposition to the proposed US missile defense system. Biden said that Jiang avoided answering direct questions about missile defense and arms control, and that Jiang only spoke in general terms about global security. PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian took a harder line during a separate meeting with the senators, telling them that there were "no grounds" for developing the missile defense shield, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. The Senators reported that, regarding allegations that China is supplying missile technology to countries such as Pakistan and the DPRK, Jiang insisted that the PRC was abiding by the letter of all its commitments on arms proliferation, but Jiang also was careful to emphasize that it was not providing any missile technology to the DPRK. "He wanted to be emphatic that it would be a bad development for Korea to gain the ability to launch missiles," Biden said.

["Top US senator in China missile talks"](#)

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## **2. Russian Nonproliferation Efforts**

Russian President Vladimir Putin gave his approval to lists of goods and technology related to missiles and biological weapons over which the state will exercise tough export controls, addressing fears in the US and elsewhere that post-Soviet Russia could be a source of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Russia has denied that its controls over these types of materials became more lax in the early post-Soviet days. However, it is clear that Russia hopes to take away from the Bush administration as much as it can of the rationale for missile defense deployment.

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## **Security**

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### **1. US Military Budget Priorities**

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is attempting to decide between drastic cuts in forces to free money for missile defense and new technology, or maintaining current levels of personnel and weapons, which many acknowledge are already stretched to fulfill their global mission. At the end of a recent meeting with Defense Department officials, Rumsfeld said he still wanted answers to six basic questions, including the benefits of increasing deployments in Asia, the risk of reducing war-fighting capabilities in Europe and the measurement for how large a military is required to protect the country's interests around the globe while fighting one major war. The other questions had classified elements and the officials refused to disclose them. There are many variables in this budget discussion, with the most difficult task facing the Defense Department is calculating how large a military the country must finance, train, equip and deploy to meet requirements of the Bush administration's new security strategy, one which has not been wholly defined.

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### **2. US StratCom**

Two editorials in the Omaha World-Herald discuss StratCom, the successor organization to the Strategic Air Command. One argues StratCom is marked by high levels of efficiency and military potency, maintained despite a 50 percent reduction in strategic force personnel since the early

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1990s. In contrast, the editorial states, the three branches of the Russian nuclear triad are fraught with command and control shortcomings, and modernizing its nuclear forces is largely beyond the government's financial reach. While this has created an environment for both countries conducive to nuclear arms cuts, cutting the US arsenal below 1,000 nuclear weapons would be dangerous because it would force an abandonment of dependence upon the triad of delivery systems. The editorial argues that large cuts will probably eliminate the land-based missile force. StratCom Commander Admiral Richard Mies told a Senate subcommittee that the goal should be encouraging stability and promoting deterrence, rather than making the reduction of warhead numbers an end in itself. The editorial concludes by arguing in favor of cuts while maintaining US security.

The second editorial cites work by the Nautilus Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council that has been useful in exposing the role of StratCom in setting US nuclear war strategy. Critics argues that the US nuclear posture has been adjusted only minimally with the end of the Cold War because of the reactionary StratCom, and that forces could be reduced, as StratCom states it is doing. The editorial concludes, however, but criticizing StratCom's critics for lowering the level of the debate rather than presenting legitimate arguments.

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The NPP Weekly FLASH Update aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among nuclear weapons policy and security specialists.

We invite you to reply to this report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#).

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